NOTE XXXVII.

THE BIRDS OF SUMBA

BY

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In his article on the birds of Sumba (anteà pp. 196—204) Mr. Büttikofer has enumerated 32 species from this seldom visited island, but, in stating that Dr. ten Kate's collection was the first one from there, he has overlooked the fact, that I published in the year 1881, in the „Verhandlungen der k.k. zoologisch-botanischen Gesellschaft in Wien" pp. 759—767, a list of birds from Sumba, based upon materials received from Dr. Riedel, the well known and meritorious investigator and collector on the islands of the eastern half of the Indian Archipelago, in which list I already enumerated 40 species.

With the exception of 8, viz.:

Astur torquatus (T.)
Sauropatis chloris (Bodd.)
Oriolus broderipi Bp.
Terpsiphone affinis (Blyth)
Artamus leucogaster (Val.)
Calornis minor (Bp.)
Megapodius duperreyi Less.
Numenius variegatus (Scop.),

Mr. Büttikofer's and my lists contain different ones, and, thus, the number of species now known from Sumba is raised to 64, which is, no doubt, only a part of the avifauna of the island. Among these 64 species only 3 appear to be peculiar to Sumba, viz.:

Ninox rudolfi M.
Graucalus sumbensis M.
Dicaeum wilhelminae B.

I further described a subspecies of *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus* from there as *sumbensis*, but Count Salvadori, in his recently published Catalogue of the Psittaci (British Museum Catalogues, Vol. XX, p. 428, note, 1892) greatly doubts the correctness of the locality ascribed to these specimens and was not able to recognize the differences pointed out by myself. I do not see sufficient reason to doubt the habitat, moreover, all 4 specimens show the same discriminating characters, small though they may be; this question, however, can only be decided by further materials. Dr. ten Kate did not procure a single parrot, whereas I enumerated, besides the one just mentioned, 3 species, on one of which I take the opportunity of offering a few remarks.

It is that which I then called *Geoffroyus jukesii* Gr. (l. c. p. 762) and of which I said, that it also occurs on Timor and Flores. Later on, in 1884, I mentioned a specimen under the same specific designation from the island of Wetter (Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft Isis in Dresden, Abh. I, p. 15), calling attention, however, to differences of size. Both notes escaped Count Salvadori in his most excellent and useful catalogue (p. 402 sq.), where he distinguishes the following species:

G. personatus (Shaw) = *jukesi* (Gr.) from Timor, Samao, Wetter.
G. floresianus Salv. from Flores.
G. sumbavensis Salv. from Sumbawa.

Guided by Salvadori's descriptions, I went again over the 3 Sumba-specimens of the Dresden Museum and came to the result, that the Sumba-form cannot be relegated to any of these 3 species. While *G. floresianus* and *sumbavensis* agree with *G. rhodops* (Gr.) in their purer and darker green coloration, the Sumba-specimens belong to Salvadori's first group (p. 400); they have the yellowish green of *G. personatus* and its allies, but they cannot be designated as *personatus* on account of their larger size and the cap coming much lower down on the nape. I, therefore, propose to call the Sumba-form:

Geoffroyus tjindanae

after one of the indigenous names of the island of Sumba, viz. Tjindana. If Salvadori had not bestowed specific rank on *G. floresianus* and *sumbavensis*, I would have given only a subspecific one to the Sumba-form, but in accordance with those I call it simply *G. tjindanae.* Moreover it would not be quite easy to place the subspecific forms of these different islands in every case under the right species; there would arise difficulties and, instead of creating clearness, confusion would result.

The differences of size, compared with Salvadori's measurements in English inches (p. 403), are the following:
G. personatus: wing 5.6—5.8, tail 2.7—3, bill 0.8—0.9
G. tjindanae: „ 6.3—6.7, „ 3.5 , „ 1 —1.05.

The measurements of *G. tjindanae* in millimeters are:

	♂	♀	juv.
total	250—260	250	230—240
wing	168	171	160
tail	90	88—89	85
tarsus	13.5	13.5	13
bill	25	26	25

The future will prove, whether there are still other differences between these two forms; I have now before me only one specimen of *personatus* from Wetter to compare with 3 from Sumba.

I further wish to correct an error in my paper of 1881. On page 767 it should be

Bubulcus coromandus (Bodd.)

instead of *Herodias nigripes* (T.). — Finally the following remark:

In the memoir of 1884, quoted above („Isis" p. 19), I recurred to *Merops ornatus* Lath. from Sumba, calling attention to a difference between Sumba-specimens and those from other localities, viz. the blue under the black band of the throat. Dr. ten Kate got no specimen of *Merops* on Sumba, and H. E. Dresser in his monograph of the *Meropidae* (1884—86), under the head of *M. ornatus*, does not mention the locality of Sumba at all, having missed both my notices. An unlucky star appears to shine over our knowledge of the avifauna of Sumba. Not only that the birds themselves are very insufficiently known up to the present, but the few notes which exist in literature, appear to have had the fate of partially escaping the eyes of such careful ornithologists as Büttikofer, Salvadori and Dresser, though I published my paper in a periodical, in which nearly all papers of the distinguished Austrian ornithologist von Pelzeln have appeared and which, therefore, cannot stand in a hidden corner of an ornithologist's library.

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